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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 50th MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. ESPINOSA (Mexico)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 110: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (continued)

(c) HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES (continued)

(d) COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION (continued)

(e) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 110: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (continued) (A/C.3/51/L.39, L.45, L.46, L.47, L.48, L.50, L.51, L.52, L.54, L.56, L.57, L.58, L.60, L.62, L.65, L.70 and L.71)

(c) HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES (continued) (A/C.3/51/L.40, L.41, L.43, L.44, L.53, L.55, L.59, L.61, L.63, L.64, L.66, L.68 and L.69)

(d) COMPREHENSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION (continued) (A/C.3/51/L.67)

(e) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (A/C.3/51/L.42)

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.42 on the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

1. Mr. VALENCIA RODRIGUEZ (Ecuador) expressed satisfaction that the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/51/36) reaffirmed the need to promote respect for human rights, strengthen peace and security and promote development. The promotion and protection of human rights must be an integral part of the work of the United Nations, particularly in view of the continuing violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms taking place throughout the world. It was essential to secure the cooperation of Governments in order to ensure respect for human rights. The work done by the High Commissioner to that end by visiting various capitals or meeting with government representatives was a basic part of his mandate and should continue in the future. All Governments were urged to cooperate with the High Commissioner and to maintain a positive dialogue with him. Cooperation between the Office of the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the competent United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies and programmes should also be encouraged, since the promotion and protection of human rights must be a joint effort.

2. He noted with satisfaction that the Office and the Centre were providing financial assistance to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Such assistance should be extended to other regional bodies which required it. It was also gratifying to note the expansion of the Centre's technical cooperation programmes in various fields. In view of the increasing number of requests for assistance from Governments, it was essential to increase the resources of the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation and, in particular, to ensure greater participation by the international financial institutions. He noted with satisfaction that the Office and the Centre had also taken timely action to promote preventive measures, which were important for alerting Governments and international agencies to the danger of potential human rights violations.

3. Introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Belgium and South Africa, he said that the High Commissioner was discharging his functions within the mandate set forth in General Assembly resolution 48/141, and the purpose of the draft resolution was to encourage him to continue to do so. As a result of further negotiations, the word "satisfaction" in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution had been replaced by the word "appreciation". The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.45 on effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

4. Mr. THEUERMANN (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.45 on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Australia, Cape Verde, Croatia, El Salvador, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Norway and the Solomon Islands, said that it, inter alia, reaffirmed the obligation of States to ensure that persons belonging to minorities could exercise fully and effectively all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue his efforts to improve the coordination and cooperation to United Nations programmes and agencies which dealt with minority issues in activities related to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

5. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) and Mr. VOLSKI (Georgia) announced that they also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.46 on human rights questions: extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

6. Mr. RYTOVUARI (Finland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Nordic countries and other sponsors, said that it once again strongly condemned all the extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions taking place throughout the world and demanded that all Governments ensure that that practice be brought to an end and take effective action to combat and eliminate the phenomenon in all its forms. The draft resolution also took note of the interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the question and requested him to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session an interim report on the situation worldwide. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.39 on the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights

7. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the member States of the European Union and the other sponsors, who had been joined by Andorra, said that the sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

8. Mr. MATESIC (Croatia), Mr. KORNELIOU (Cyprus), Mr. RITTER (Liechtenstein), Mr. PACE (Malta), Mr. BALL (New Zealand), Mrs. LIMJUCO (Philippines) and Mrs. VARGAS (Nicaragua) announced that they wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.40 on the situation of human rights in Iraq

9. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution, said that Andorra, Argentina, the Czech Republic and Japan had become sponsors. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by a large majority, as had been the case in the past.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.41 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

10. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution, said that Andorra and Liechtenstein had become sponsors. Consultations were continuing on the draft resolution and revised text might be submitted.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.53 on the situation of human rights in Nigeria

11. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution, said that Andorra and Romania had become sponsors. Consultations were continuing on the draft resolution and a revised text might be submitted.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.47 on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance

12. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), introducing the draft resolution, said that Albania, Andorra, Norway and Romania had become sponsors. Consultations on the draft resolution were continuing and it was hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

13. Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina), Mr. VOLSKI (Georgia), Mrs. EDWARDS (Marshall Islands) and Mr. NAWROT (Poland) said that they too wished to sponsor draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.47.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.48 on the question of enforced or involuntary disappearances

14. Mr. DESAGNEAUX (France), introducing the draft resolution, said that Cuba, Haiti, Lithuania, Malta and San Marino had become sponsors. The following two paragraphs had been inserted after paragraph 9 of the draft resolution:

> "Requests the Working Group, in the continued exercise of its mandate, to take into account the provisions of the Declaration and to modify its working methods, if necessary;
>
> "Recalls that the primary role of the Working Group, as described in its reports, is to act as a channel of communication between the families of disappeared persons and the Governments concerned, with a view to ensuring that sufficiently documented and clearly identified individual cases are investigated, and to ascertain whether such information falls under its mandate and contains the required elements, and invites it to continue to seek the views and comments of all concerned, including Member States, in the elaboration of its report;".

15. In view of the need for appropriate measures to protect human rights throughout the world, the draft resolution supported and encouraged the work of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

16. The CHAIRMAN announced that Togo also wished to sponsor draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.48.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.50 on the follow-up to the United Nations Year for Tolerance

17. Mr. ARDA (Turkey), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Malaysia, Pakistan and the Philippines, said that it called on the international community and individual Member States to continue working for the promotion of tolerance and respect for human rights. Tolerance was a prerequisite for a better world and much had been done since 1991 to increase public awareness of its importance. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

18. The CHAIRMAN noted that Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mauritius and Rwanda wished to become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.50.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.52 on the strengthening of the rule of law

19. Mr. PINTA GAMA (Brazil), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, who had been joined by Ukraine, said that it provided guidance for the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights in implementing the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. The High Commissioner played an essential role as the focal point for coordinating system-wide attention for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The sponsors hoped that by its next session, the General Assembly would be able to consider a broad set of ideas and practical suggestions on how to help States build and strengthen adequate national structures that had a direct impact on the overall observance of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law.

20. The CHAIRMAN noted that Belgium, Burundi, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mongolia, Poland and Samoa wished to become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.52.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.55 on human rights in Haiti

21. Ms. DURAN (Venezuela), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General (Argentina, Canada, Chile, France, the United States of America and Venezuela) and the other sponsors, said that Chad should not be listed as a sponsor and that Belgium and Mexico should be listed. The draft resolution urged the international community to continue supporting progress towards democracy and human rights in Haiti. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus, as an indication of the international community's commitment to furthering the cause of human rights in Haiti.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.61 on human rights in the Sudan

22. Mrs. LEBL (United States of America), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that Monaco and Romania had also become sponsors. The draft resolution enjoyed wide support in the Committee, indicating the importance attached to the universality of human rights. The sponsors had made great efforts to arrive at a consensus text and hope that the draft resolution would be adopted in that spirit.

23. The CHAIRMAN noted that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia wished to become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.61.

Draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.64 on human rights in Rwanda

24. Mr. SAVAGE (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that Chile and Romania had become sponsors. The sponsors' intention had been to review the existing human rights situation and to highlight areas where the Rwandan Government could, in cooperation with the international community, continue to make progress. They hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

25. The CHAIRMAN noted that Poland also wished to sponsor draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.64.

26. Ms. NEWELL (Secretary of the Committee) informed the Committee that draft resolutions A/C.3/51/L.40, L.41, L.45-L.48, L.50, L.52 and L.53 had no programme budget implications.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.